Martin of Tours

(316/336 – 8 November 397)

BRIEFING

Martin of Tours (Latin: Martinus Turonensis; 316/336 – 8 November 397) was the third bishop of Tours. He is the patron saint of many communities and organizations across Europe, including France's Third Republic. A native of Pannonia (present-day Hungary), he converted to Christianity at a young age. He served in the Roman cavalry in Gaul, but left military service prior to 361, when he became a disciple of Hilary of Poitiers, establishing the monastery at Ligugé. He was consecrated as Bishop of Caesarodunum (Tours) in 371. As bishop, he was active in the suppression of the remnants of Gallo-Roman religion.

The contemporary hagiographer Sulpicius Severus wrote a Life of St. Martin. He is best known for the account of his using his sword to cut his cloak in two, to give half to a beggar clad only in rags in winter. His shrine in Tours became an often-frequented stop for pilgrims on the road to Santiago de Compostela in Spain.

HAGIOGRAPHY

Sulpicius Severus, a contemporary Christian writer who knew Martin personally, wrote a hagiography of the early life of the saint. It contains descriptions of supernatural events such as interactions with the devil and various miracles: Martin casts out demons, heals a paralytic, and raises the dead. Other miracles are: turning back the flames from a house while Martin was burning down the Roman temple it adjoined; deflecting the path of a felled sacred pine; the healing power of a letter written by Martin.

LIFE

Soldier

Martin was born in AD 316 or 336 in Savaria in the Diocese of Pannonia (now Szombathely, Hungary). His father was a senior officer (tribune) in the Roman military. His father was then allowed veteran status and was given land on which to retire at Ticinum (now Pavia), in northern Italy, where Martin grew up.

At the age of 10 he attended the Christian church against the wishes of his parents and became a catechumen. Christianity had been made a legal religion (in 313) in the Roman Empire. It had many more adherents in the Eastern Empire, whence it had sprung, and was concentrated in cities, brought along the trade routes by converted Jews and Greeks (the term "pagan" literally means "country-dweller"). Christianity was far from accepted among the higher echelons of society; among members of the army the worship of Mithras would have been stronger. Although the conversion of the Emperor Constantine and the subsequent programme of church-building gave a greater impetus to the spread of the religion, it was still a minority faith.

As the son of a veteran officer, Martin at 15 was required to join a cavalry ala. At the age of 18 (around 334 or 354), he was stationed at Ambianensium civitas or Samarobriva in Gaul (now Amiens, France). It is likely that he joined the Equites catafractarii Ambianenses, a heavy cavalry unit listed in the Notitia Dignitatum. As the unit was stationed at Milan and is also recorded at Trier, it is likely to have been part of the elite cavalry bodyguard of the Emperor, which accompanied him on his travels around the Empire.

Martin's biographer, Sulpicius Severus, provided no dates in his chronology, so although he indicated that Martin served in the military "for nearly two years after his baptism", it is difficult for the historian to pin down the exact date of Martin's exit from military service. Still, historian Andre Mertens has provided this guidance: "He [Martin] served under the Roman emperor Constantine II (ruled 337–340) and afterwards under Julian (ruled 361–363)".

Regardless of the difficulties in chronology, Sulpicius reports that just before a battle in the Gallic provinces at Borbetomagus (now Worms, Germany), Martin determined that his switch of allegiance to a new commanding officer (away from antichristian Julian and to Christ), along with reluctance to receive Julian's pay just as Martin was retiring, prohibited his taking the money and continuing to submit to the authority of the former now, telling him, "I am the soldier of Christ: it is not lawful for me to fight." He was charged with cowardice and jailed, but in response to the charge, he volunteered to go unarmed to the front of the troops. His superiors planned to take him up on the offer, but before they could, the invaders sued for peace, the battle never occurred, and Martin was released from military service.

Monk and Hermit

Martin declared his vocation, and made his way to the city of Caesarodunum (now Tours), where he became a disciple of Hilary of Poitiers' Christian orthodoxy. He opposed the Arianism of the Imperial Court. When Hilary was forced into exile from Pictavium (now Poitiers), Martin returned to Italy. According to Sulpicius, he converted an Alpine brigand on the way, and confronted the Devil himself. Having heard in a dream a summons to revisit his home, Martin crossed the Alps, and from Milan went over to Pannonia. There he converted his mother and some other persons; his father he could not win over. While in Illyricum he took sides against the Arians with so much zeal that he was publicly whipped and forced to leave. Returning from Illyria, he was confronted by Auxentius of Milan, the Arian Archbishop of Milan, who expelled him from the city. According to the early sources, Martin decided to seek shelter on the island then called Gallinaria, now Isola d'Albenga, in the Ligurian Sea, where he lived the solitary life of a hermit. Not entirely alone, since the chronicles indicate that he would have been in the company of a priest, a man of great virtues, and for a period with Hilary of Poitiers, on this island, where the wild hens lived. Martin lived on a diet of herbs and wild roots.

With the return of Hilary to his see in 361, Martin joined him and established a hermitage at what is now the town of Ligugé south of Poitiers, and soon attracted converts and followers. The crypt under the parish church (not the current Abbey Chapel) reveals traces of a Roman villa, probably part of the bath complex, which had been abandoned before Martin established himself there. The monastery became a centre for the evangelisation of the country districts around Poitiers, and later developed into Ligugé Abbey, belonging to the Order of St. Benedict and claiming to be the oldest monastery known in western Europe.

Bishop

In 371, Martin succeeded Litorius, the second bishop of Tours. He impressed the city with his demeanour. He was enticed to Tours from Ligugé by a ruse — he was urged to come to minister to someone sick — and was brought to the church, where he reluctantly allowed himself to be consecrated bishop. According to one version, he was so unwilling to be made bishop that he hid in a barn full of geese, but their cackling at his intrusion gave him away to the crowd; that may account for complaints by a few that his appearance was too disheveled to be commensurate with a bishopric, but the critics were hugely outnumbered.

As bishop, Martin set to enthusiastically ordering the destruction of pagan temples, altars and sculptures:

> *[W]hen in a certain village he had demolished a very ancient temple, and had set about cutting down a pine-tree, which stood close to the temple, the chief priest of that place, and a crowd of other heathens began to oppose him; and these people, though, under the influence of the Lord, they had been quiet while the temple was being overthrown, could not patiently allow the tree to be cut down.*
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> ***—Severus 1894, ch. xiii***

Sulpicius writes that Martin withdrew from the city to live in Marmoutier (Majus Monasterium), a rural monastery which he founded a short distance upstream from Tours on the opposite shore of the river Loire. Martin introduced a rudimentary parish system in his diocese. Once a year, the bishop visited each of his parishes, traveling on foot, or by donkey or boat. He continued to set up monastic communities, and extended the influence of his episcopate from Touraine to such distant points as Chartres, Paris, Autun, and Vienne.

In one instance, the pagans agreed to fell their sacred pine tree, if Martin would stand directly in its path. He did so, and it miraculously missed him. Sulpicius, a classically educated aristocrat, related this anecdote with dramatic details, as a set piece. Sulpicius could not have failed to know the incident the Roman poet Horace recalls in several Odes of his own narrow escape from a falling tree.

On behalf of the Priscillianists

The churches of other parts of Gaul and in Spain were being disturbed by the Priscillianists, an ascetic sect, named after its leader, Priscillian. The First Council of Saragossa had forbidden several of Priscillian's practices (albeit without mentioning Priscillian by name), but Priscillian was elected bishop of Ávila shortly thereafter. Ithacius of Ossonoba appealed to the emperor Gratian, who issued a rescript against Priscillian and his followers. After failing to obtain the support of Ambrose of Milan and Pope Damasus I, Priscillian appealed to Magnus Maximus, who had usurped the throne from Gratian.

Although greatly opposed to the Priscillianists, Martin traveled to the Imperial court of Trier to remove them from the secular jurisdiction of the emperor. With Ambrose, Martin rejected Bishop Ithacius's principle of putting heretics to death — as well as the intrusion of the emperor into such matters. He prevailed upon the emperor to spare the life of the heretic Priscillian. At first, Maximus acceded to his entreaty, but, when Martin had departed, yielded to Ithacius and ordered Priscillian and his followers to be beheaded (in 385). Martin then pleaded for a cessation of the persecution of Priscillian's followers in Spain. Deeply grieved, Martin refused to communicate with Ithacius until pressured by the Emperor.

Death

Martin died in Candes-Saint-Martin, Gaul (central France) in 397. After he died, local citizens of the Poitou region and residents of Tours quarreled over where Martin would be buried. One evening after dark, several residents of Tours carried Martin's body to a waiting boat on the river Loire, where teams of rowers ferried his body on the river to Tours, where a huge throng of people waited on the river banks to meet and pay their last respects to Martin's body. One chronicle states that "2,000 monks, and nearly as many white-robed virgins, walked in the procession" accompanying the body from the river to a small grove just west of the city, where Martin was buried and where his shrine was established.

Shrine Basilica

The shrine chapel at Tours developed into one of the most prominent and influential establishments in medieval France. Charlemagne awarded the position of Abbot to his friend and adviser Alcuin. At this time the abbot could travel between Tours and the court at Trier in Germany and always stay overnight at one of his own properties. It was at Tours that Alcuin's scriptorium (a room in monasteries devoted to the copying of manuscripts by monastic scribes) developed Carolingian minuscule, the clear round hand that made manuscripts far more legible.

In later times the abbey was destroyed by fire on several occasions and ransacked by Norman Vikings in 853 and in 903. It burned again in 994, and was rebuilt by Hervé de Buzançais, treasurer of Saint Martin, an effort that took 20 years to complete. Expanded to accommodate the crowds of pilgrims and to attract them, the shrine of St. Martin of Tours became an often-frequented stop on pilgrimages. In 1453 the remains of Saint Martin were transferred to a magnificent new reliquary donated by Charles VII of France and Agnès Sorel.

During the French Wars of Religion, the basilica was sacked by the Protestant Huguenots in 1562. It was disestablished during the French Revolution. It was deconsecrated, used as a stable, then utterly demolished. Its dressed stones were sold in 1802 after two streets were built across the site, to ensure the abbey would not be reconstructed.

Basilica of Saint Martin, Tours

The Basilica of Saint Martin is a Catholic basilica dedicated to Saint Martin of Tours, over whose tomb it was built. It is located in Tours, France.

The first basilica was established here in the 5th century (consecrated in 471) on the site of an earlier chapel. It was at first served by a community of monks under an abbot, the Abbot of Saint Martin, who between 796 and 804 was Alcuin, the adviser of Charlemagne. Shortly before this the monastic establishment was changed to a collegiate church manned by a community of canons, but the office and title of abbot persisted.

The medieval basilica was completely demolished during the French Revolution. The present church was built between 1886 and 1924 by French architect Victor Laloux in a Neo-Byzantine style, on part of the site of the original basilica which was repurchased by the Church. It was dedicated on 4 July 1925.

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After the radical Paris Commune of 1871, there was a resurgence of conservative Catholic piety, and the church decided to build a basilica to Saint Martin. They selected Victor Laloux as architect. He eschewed Gothic for a mix of Romanesque and Byzantine, sometimes defined as neo-Byzantine. The new Basilique Saint-Martin was erected on a portion of its former site, which was purchased from the owners. Started in 1886, the church was consecrated on 4 July 1925.

LEGEND OF SAINT MARTIN DIVIDING HIS CLOAK

While Martin was a soldier in the Roman army and stationed in Gaul (modern-day France), he experienced a vision, which became the most-repeated story about his life. One day as he was approaching the gates of the city of Amiens, he met a scantily clad beggar. He impulsively cut his military cloak in half to share with the man. That night, Martin dreamed of Jesus wearing the half of the cloak he had given away. He heard Jesus say to some of the angels, "Martin, who is still but a catechumen, clothed me with this robe." (Sulpicius, ch 2). In another version, when Martin woke, he found his cloak restored to wholeness. The dream confirmed Martin in his piety, and he was baptised at the age of 18.

The part kept by himself became the famous relic preserved in the oratory of the Merovingian kings of the Franks at the Marmoutier Abbey near Tours. During the Middle Ages, the supposed relic of St. Martin's miraculous cloak (cappa Sancti Martini) was carried by the king even into battle, and used as a holy relic upon which oaths were sworn. The cloak is first attested to in the royal treasury in 679 when it was conserved at the palatium of Luzarches, a royal villa that was later ceded to the monks of Saint-Denis by Charlemagne, in 798/99.

The priest who cared for the cloak in its reliquary was called a cappellanu, and ultimately all priests who served the military were called cappellani. The French translation is chapelains, from which the English word chaplain is derived.

A similar linguistic development took place for the term referring to the small temporary churches built for the relic. People called them a "capella", the word for a little cloak. Eventually, such small churches lost their association with the cloak, and all small churches began to be referred to as "chapels".

VENERATION

The veneration of Martin was widely popular in the Middle Ages, above all in the region between the Loire and the Marne, where Le Roy Ladurie and Zysberg noted the densest accretion of place names commemorating Martin. Venantius Fortunatus had earlier declared, "Wherever Christ is known, Martin is honored."

When Bishop Perpetuus took office at Tours in 461, the little chapel over Martin's grave, built in the previous century by Martin's immediate successor, Bricius, was no longer sufficient for the crowd of pilgrims it was already drawing. Perpetuus built a larger basilica, 38 m (125 ft) long and 18 m (59 ft) wide, with 120 columns. Martin's body was taken from the simple chapel at his hermitage at Candes-St-Martin to Tours and his sarcophagus was reburied behind the high altar of the new basilica. A large block of marble above the tomb, the gift of bishop Euphronius of Autun (472–475), rendered it visible to the faithful gathered behind the high altar. Werner Jacobsen suggests it may also have been visible to pilgrims encamped in the atrium of the basilica. Contrary to the usual arrangement, the atrium was situated behind the church, close to the tomb in the apse, which may have been visible through a fenestrella in the apse wall.

St. Martin's popularity can be partially attributed to his adoption by successive royal houses of France. Clovis, King of the Salian Franks, one of many warring tribes in sixth-century France, promised his Christian wife Clotilda that he would be baptised if he was victorious over the Alemanni. He credited the intervention of St Martin with his success, and with several following triumphs, including the defeat of Alaric II. The popular devotion to St Martin continued to be closely identified with the Merovingian monarchy: in the early seventh century Dagobert I commissioned the goldsmith Saint Eligius to make a work in gold and gems for the tomb-shrine. The bishop Gregory of Tours wrote and distributed an influential Life filled with miraculous events of St. Martin's career. Martin's cultus survived the passage of power to the Merovingians' successors, the Carolingian dynasty.

Martin is honored in the Church of England and in the Episcopal Church on 11 November.

Revival of the popular devotion to Saint Martin in the Third Republic

Throughout the lifetime of the Third Republic (1870–1940), there were battles over the status of the Catholic Church in France among the republicans, monarchists and the authoritarians (such as the Napoleonists). The French clergy and bishops were closely associated with the monarchists and many of its hierarchy were from noble families. Republicans were based in the anti-clerical middle class, who saw the Church's alliance with the monarchists as a political threat to republicanism, and a threat to the modern spirit of progress. The republicans detested the Church for its political and class affiliations; for them, the Church represented the Ancien Régime, a time in French history most republicans hoped was long behind them. The republicans were strengthened by Protestant and Jewish support. Numerous laws were passed to weaken the Catholic Church. In 1879, priests were excluded from the administrative committees of hospitals and boards of charity; in 1880, new measures were directed against the religious congregations; from 1880 to 1890 came the substitution of lay women for nuns in many hospitals; in 1882, the Ferry school laws were passed. Napoleon's Concordat of 1801 continued in operation, but in 1881, the government cut off salaries to priests it disliked.

Republicans feared that religious orders in control of schools—especially the Jesuits and Assumptionists—indoctrinated anti-republicanism into children. Determined to root this out, republicans insisted they needed control of the schools for France to achieve economic and militaristic progress. (Republicans felt one of the primary reasons for the German victory in 1870 was their superior education system.)

The early anti-Catholic laws were largely the work of republican Jules Ferry in 1882. Religious instruction in all schools was forbidden, and religious orders were forbidden to teach in them. Funds were appropriated from religious schools to build more state schools. Later in the century, other laws passed by Ferry's successors further weakened the Church's position in French society. Civil marriage became compulsory, divorce was introduced, and chaplains were removed from the army.

When Leo XIII became pope in 1878, he tried to calm Church-State relations. In 1884, he told French bishops not to act in a hostile manner toward the State (Nobilissima Gallorum gens). In 1892 he issued Au milieu des sollicitudes, an encyclical advising French Catholics to rally to the Republic and defend the Church by participating in republican politics. The Popular Liberal Action (Action libérale populaire, or ALP) party was founded in 1901 by Jacques Piou and Albert de Mun, former monarchists who switched to republicanism at the request of Pope Leo XIII. From the Church's perspective, its mission was to express the political ideals and new social doctrines embodied in Leo's 1891 encyclical Rerum novarum.

Action libérale was the parliamentary group from which the ALP political party emerged, adding the word populaire ("popular") to signify this expansion. Membership was open to everyone, not just Catholics. It sought to gather all the "honest people" and to be the melting pot sought by Leo XIII where Catholics and moderate Republicans would unite to support a policy of tolerance and social progress. Its motto summarized its program: "Liberty for all; equality before the law; better conditions for the workers." However, the "old republicans" were few, and it did not manage to regroup all Catholics, as it was shunned by monarchists, Christian democrats, and Integrists. In the end, it recruited mostly among the liberal-Catholics (Jacques Piou) and the Social Catholics (Albert de Mun). The ALP was drawn into battle from its very beginnings (its first steps coincided with the beginning of the Combes ministry and its anticlerical combat policy), as religious matters were at the heart of its preoccupations. It defended the Church in the name of liberty and common law. Fiercely fought by the Action française, the movement declined from 1908, when it lost the support of Rome. Nevertheless, the ALP remained until 1914 the most important party on the right.

The attempt at improving the relationship with republicans failed. Deep-rooted suspicions remained on both sides and were inflamed by the Dreyfus Affair (1894–1906). Catholics were for the most part anti-Dreyfusard. The Assumptionists published anti-Semitic and anti-republican articles in their journal La Croix. This infuriated republican politicians, who were eager to take revenge. Often they worked in alliance with Masonic lodges. The Waldeck-Rousseau Ministry (1899–1902) and the Combes Ministry (1902–05) fought with the Vatican over the appointment of bishops. Chaplains were removed from naval and military hospitals in the years 1903 and 1904, and soldiers were ordered not to frequent Catholic clubs in 1904.

Emile Combes, when elected Prime Minister in 1902, was determined to defeat Catholicism thoroughly. After only a short while in office, he closed down all parochial schools in France. Then he had parliament reject authorization of all religious orders. This meant that all fifty-four orders in France were banned and about 20,000 members immediately left France, many for Spain. In 1904, Émile Loubet, the president of France from 1899 to 1906, visited King Victor Emmanuel III of Italy in Rome, and Pope Pius X protested at this recognition of the Italian State. Combes reacted strongly and recalled his ambassador to the Holy See. Then, in 1905, a law was introduced that abolished Napoleon's 1801 Concordat. Church and State were declared separate, though all Church property was confiscated. Religious personnel were no longer paid by the State. Public worship was to be given over to associations of Catholic laymen who controlled access to churches. However, in practice, masses and rituals continued to be performed.

Combes was vigorously opposed by all the Conservative parties, who saw the mass closure of church schools as a persecution of religion. Combes led the anti-clerical coalition on the left, facing opposition primarily organized by the pro-Catholic ALP. The ALP had a stronger popular base, with better financing and a stronger network of newspapers, but had far fewer seats in parliament.

The Combes government worked with Masonic lodges to create a secret surveillance of all army officers to make sure that devout Catholics would not be promoted. Exposed as the Affaire Des Fiches, the scandal undermined support for the Combes government, and he resigned. It also undermined morale in the army, as officers realized that hostile spies examining their private lives were more important to their careers than their own professional accomplishments.

In December 1905, the government of Maurice Rouvier introduced the French law on the separation of Church and State. This law was heavily supported by Combes, who had been strictly enforcing the 1901 voluntary association law and the 1904 law on religious congregations' freedom of teaching. On 10 February 1905, the Chamber declared that "the attitude of the Vatican" had rendered the separation of Church and State inevitable and the law of the separation of church and state was passed in December 1905. The Church was badly hurt and lost half its priests. In the long run, however, it gained autonomy; ever after, the State no longer had a voice in choosing bishops, thus Gallicanism was dead.

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Martin's renewed popularity in France was related to his promotion as a military saint during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871. During the military and political crisis of the Franco-Prussian war, Napoleon III's Second Empire collapsed. After the surrender of Napoleon to the Prussians after the Battle of Sedan in September 1870, a provisional government of national defense was established, and France's Third Republic was proclaimed. Paris was evacuated due to the advancing enemy and for a brief time (September–December 1870), Tours became the effective capital of France.[citation needed] During the French Third Republic, he was seen as a patron saint of France.

St Martin was promoted by the clerical right as the protector of the nation against the German threat. Conservatives associated the dramatic collapse of Napoleon III's regime as a sign of divine retribution on the irreligious emperor. Priests interpreted it as punishment for a nation led astray due to years of anti-clericalism. They preached repentance and a return to religion for political stability. The ruined towers of the old royal basilica of St. Martin at Tours came to symbolize the decline of traditional Catholic France.

With the government's relocation to Tours during the Franco-Prussian War, 1870, numerous pilgrims were attracted to St. Martin's tomb. It was covered by a temporary chapel built by archbishop Guibert. The popular devotion to St. Martin was also associated with the nationalistic devotion to the Sacred Heart. The flag of Sacre-Coeur, borne by Ultramontane Catholic Pontifical Zouaves who fought at Patay, had been placed overnight in St. Martin's tomb before being taken into battle on 9 October 1870. The banner read "Heart of Jesus Save France" and on the reverse side Carmelite nuns of Tours embroidered "Saint Martin Protect France".As the French army was victorious in Patay, many among the faithful took the victory to be the result of divine favor. Popular hymns of the 1870s developed the theme of national protection under the cover of Martin's cloak, the "first flag of France".

During the nineteenth-century Frenchmen, influenced by secularism, agnosticism, and anti-clericalism, deserted the church in great numbers. As Martin was a man's saint, the devotion to him was an exception to this trend. For men serving in the military, Martin of Tours was presented by the Catholic Right as the masculine model of principled behavior. He was a brave fighter, knew his obligation to the poor, shared his goods, performed his required military service, followed legitimate orders, and respected secular authority.

During the 1870s, the procession to St. Martin's tomb at Tours became a display of ecclesiastical and military cooperation. Army officers in full uniform acted as military escorts, symbolically protecting the clergy and clearing the path for them. Anti-clerics viewed the staging of public religious processions as a violation of civic space. In 1878, M. Rivière, the provisional mayor of Tours, with anticlerical support banned the November procession in honor of St. Martin. President Patrice de Mac-Mahon was succeeded by the Republican Jules Grévy, who created a new national anticlerical offensive. Bishop Louis-Édouard-François-Desiré Pie of Poitiers united conservatives and devised a massive demonstration for the November 1879 procession. Pie's ultimate hope was that St Martin would stop the "chariot" of modern society, and lead to the creation of a France where the religious and secular sectors merged.

The struggle between the two men was reflective of that between conservatives and anti-clerics over the church's power in the army. From 1874, military chaplains were allowed in the army in times of peace, but anti-clerics viewed the chaplains as sinister monarchists and counter-revolutionaries. Conservatives responded by creating the short-lived Legion de Saint Maurice in 1878 and the society, Notre Dame de Soldats, to provide unpaid voluntary chaplains with financial support. The legislature passed the anticlerical Duvaux Bill of 1880, which reduced the number of chaplains in the French army. Anticlerical legislators wanted commanders, not chaplains, to provide troops with moral support and to supervise their formation in the established faith of "patriotic Republicanism".

St. Martin as a French Republican Patron

St. Martin has long been associated with France's royal heritage. Monsignor René François Renou (Archbishop of Tours, 1896–1913) worked to associate St. Martin as a specifically "republican" patron. Renou had served as a chaplain to the 88e Régiment des mobils d'Indre-et-Loire during the Franco-Prussian war and was known as the "army bishop". Renou was a strong supporter of St. Martin and believed that the national destiny of France and all its victories were attributed to him. He linked the military to the cloak of St. Martin, which was the "first flag of France" to the French tricolor, "the symbol of the union of the old and new." This flag symbolism connected the devotion to St. Martin with the Third Republic. But, the tensions of the Dreyfus Affair renewed anti-clericalism in France and drove a wedge between the Church and the Republic. By 1905, the influence of Rene Waldeck-Rousseau and Emile Combes, combined with deteriorating relations with the Vatican, led to the separation of church and state.

St. Martin's popularity was renewed during the First World War. Anticlericalism declined, and priests served in the French forces as chaplains. More than 5,000 of them died in the war. In 1916, Assumptionists organized a national pilgrimage to Tours that attracted people from all of France. The devotion to St. Martin was amplified in the dioceses of France, where special prayers were offered to the patron saint. When the armistice was signed on Saint Martin's Day, 11 November 1918, the French people saw it was a sign of his intercession in the affairs of France.

PATRONAGE

He is the patron saint of beggars (because of his sharing his cloak), wool-weavers and tailors (also because of his cloak), he is also the patron saint of the US Army Quartermaster Corps (also because of sharing his cloak), geese (some say because they gave his hiding place away when he tried to avoid being chosen as bishop, others because their migration coincides with his feast), vintners and innkeepers (because his feast falls just after the late grape harvest), and France. He was proclaimed patron of Italian volunteering by the Italian bishops in the spring of 2021.

Beyond his patronage of the French Third Republic, Saint Martin more recently has also been described in terms of "a spiritual bridge across Europe" due to his "international" background, being a native of Pannonia who spent his adult life in Gaul.

ICONOGRAPHY

Martin is most generally portrayed on horseback dividing his cloak with the beggar. His emblem in English art is often that of a goose, whose annual migration is about late autumn.

INFLUENCE

By the early 9th century, respect for Saint Martin was well-established in Ireland. His monastery at Marmoûtiers became the training ground for many Celtic missions and missionaries. Some believe that St. Patrick was his nephew and that Patrick was one of many Celtic notables who lived for a time at Marmoûtiers. St. Ninian definitely studied at Marmoûtiers and was profoundly influenced by Martin. Ninian dedicated a new church to Martin. The Book of Armagh contains, among other texts, almost the complete body of writings on Saint Martin by Sulpicius Severus.

In Jonas of Bobbio's Vita Columbani, Jonas relates that Saint Columbanus, while travelling, requested to be allowed to pray at the tomb of St Martin. The Irish palimpsest sacramentary from the mid-7th century contains the text of a mass for St Martin. In the Life of Columba, Adamnan mentions in passing that St Martin was commemorated during Mass at Iona.

In his Ireland and Her Neighbours in the Seventh Century, Michael Richter attributes this to the mission of Palladius seen within the wider context of the mission of Germanus of Auxerre to Britain around 429. Thus, this could be the context in which the Life of St Martin was brought from Gaul to Ireland at an early date, and could explain how Columbanus was familiar with it before he ever left Ireland.

LEGACY

Ligugé Abbey

Founded by Martin of Tours in 360, Ligugé Abbey is one of the earliest monastic foundations in France. The reputation of the founder attracted a large number of disciples to the new monastery; the disciples initially living in locaciacum or small huts, this name later evolved to Ligugé. Its reputation was soon eclipsed by Martin's later foundation at Marmoutier. As of 2013, the Benedictine community at Ligugé numbered twenty-five.

European Folk Traditions

From the late 4th century to the late Middle Ages, much of Western Europe, including Great Britain, engaged in a period of fasting beginning on the day after St. Martin's Day, November 11. This fast period lasted 40 days (not including Saturdays and Sundays), and was, therefore, called Quadragesima Sancti Martini, which means in Latin "the forty days of St. Martin". At St. Martin's eve and on the feast day, people ate and drank very heartily for a last time before they started to fast. This fasting time was later called "Advent" by the Church and was considered a time for spiritual preparation for Christmas.

On St. Martin's Day, children in Flanders, the southern and northern parts of the Netherlands, and the Catholic areas of Germany and Austria participate in paper lantern processions. Often, a man dressed as St. Martin rides on a horse in front of the procession. The children sing songs about St. Martin and about their lanterns. The food traditionally eaten on the day is goose, a rich bird. According to legend, Martin was reluctant to become bishop, which is why he hid in a stable filled with geese. The noise made by the geese betrayed his location to the people who were looking for him.

In the eastern part of the Belgian province of East Flanders (Aalst) and the western part of West Flanders (Ypres), traditionally children receive presents from St. Martin on November 11, instead of from Saint Nicholas on December 6 or Santa Claus on December 25. They also have lantern processions, for which children make lanterns out of beets. In recent years, the lantern processions have become widespread as a popular ritual, even in Protestant areas of Germany and the Netherlands, although most Protestant churches no longer officially recognize Saints.

In Portugal, where the saint's day is celebrated across the country, it is common for families and friends to gather around the fire in reunions called magustos, where they typically eat roasted chestnuts and drink wine, jeropiga (a drink made of grape must and aguardente) and aguapé (a sort of weak and watered-down wine). According to the most widespread variation of the cloak story, Saint Martin cut off half of his cloak in order to offer it to a beggar and along the way, he gave the remaining part to a second beggar. As he faced a long ride in a freezing weather, the dark clouds cleared away and the sun shone so intensely that the frost melted away. Such weather was rare for early November, so was credited to God's intervention. The phenomenon of a sunny break to the chilly weather on Saint Martin's Day (11 November) is called Verão de São Martinho (Saint Martin's Summer, veranillo de san Martín in Spanish) in honor of the cloak legend.

In Malta on the night of the eve of Saint Martin's day children leave an empty bag next to the bed. This bag is found full of fruit on the next day.

Many churches are named after Saint Martin of Tours. St Martin-in-the-Fields, at Trafalgar Square in the centre of London, has a history appropriately associated with Martin's renunciation of war; Dick Sheppard, founder of the Peace Pledge Union, was Vicar 1914–26, and there is a memorial chapel for him, with a plaque for Vera Brittain, also a noted Anglican pacifist; the steps of the church are often used for peace vigils. Saint Martin's Cathedral, in Ypres, Belgium, is dedicated to him. St. Martin is the patron saint of Szombathely, Hungary, with a church dedicated to him, and also the patron saint of Buenos Aires. In the Netherlands, he is the patron of the cathedral and city of Utrecht. He is the patron of the city of Groningen; its Martini tower and Martinikerk (Groningen) (Martin's Church) were named for him.

He is also the patron of the church and town of Bocaue.

St. Martin's Church in Kaiserslautern, Germany is a major city landmark. It is located in the heart of the city's downtown in St. Martin's Square, and is surrounded by a number of restaurants and shops. The church was originally built as a Franciscan monastery in the 14th century and has a number of unique architectural features.

St. Martin is the patron saint of the Polish towns of Bydgoszcz and Opatów. His day is celebrated with a procession and festivities in the city of Poznań, where the main street (Święty Marcin) is named for him, after a 13th-century church in his honor. A special type of crescent cake (rogal świętomarciński) is baked for the occasion. As November 11 is also Polish Independence Day, it is a public holiday.

The Monastery of Saint Martin of Castañeda has been a national historic monument since 1931. It is located in Galende, Sanabria, province of Zamora, Spain. It now functions as an interpretation center.

In Latin America, St. Martin has a strong popular following and is frequently referred to as San Martín Caballero, in reference to his common depiction on horseback. Mexican folklore believes him to be a particularly helpful saint toward business owners.

The largest Anglican church in North America is St Martin's Episcopal in Houston, Texas. It was the home church for many years of President and Mrs. George H. W. Bush and still is for former Secretary of State and Treasury James Baker and his wife Susan.

San Martín de Loba is the name of a municipality in the Bolívar Department of Colombia. Saint Martin, as San Martín de Loba, is the patron saint of Vasquez, a small village in Colombia.

In Finland, the town and municipality Marttila (S:t Mårtens in Swedish) is named after St. Martin and depicts him on its coat of arms.

Though no mention of St. Martin's connection with viticulture is made by Gregory of Tours or other early hagiographers, he is now credited with a prominent role in spreading wine-making throughout the Touraine region and the planting of many vines. The Greek myth that Aristaeus first discovered the concept of pruning the vines, after watching a goat eat some of the foliage, has been adopted for Martin. He is also credited with introducing the Chenin blanc grape varietal, from which most of the white wine of western Touraine and Anjou is made.

Martin Luther was named after St. Martin, as he was baptised on 11 November 1483 (St. Martin's Day), and many older Lutheran congregations are named after St. Martin.

Martin of Tours is the patron saint of the U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps, which has a medal in his name.

The Anglican Church Lads' and Church Girls' Brigade, a 5-7 age group, was renamed "Martins" in his honour in 1998.

Many schools have St Martin as their Patron, one being St. Martin's School (Rosettenville) in Johannesburg.

SAINT MARTIN'S DAY

Saint Martin's Day or Martinmas (obsolete: Martlemas), and historically called Old Halloween or All Hallows Eve, is the feast day of Saint Martin of Tours and is celebrated in the liturgical year on 11 November. In the Middle Ages and early modern period, it was an important festival in many parts of Europe, particularly Germanic-speaking regions. In these regions, it marked the end of the harvest season and beginning of winter and the "winter revelling season". Traditions include feasting on 'Martinmas goose' or 'Martinmas beef', drinking the first wine of the season, and mumming. In some German and Dutch-speaking towns, there are processions of children with lanterns (Laternelaufen), sometimes led by a horseman representing St Martin. The saint was also said to bestow gifts on children. In the Rhineland, it is also marked by lighting bonfires.

Origins

Martin of Tours (died 397) was a Roman soldier who was baptized as an adult and became a bishop in Gaul. He is best known for the legend whereby he cut his cloak in half with his sword to give half to a beggar who was dressed in only rags in the depth of winter. That night Martin had a vision of Jesus Christ wearing the half-cloak.

In his study Medieval English Martinmesse: The Archaeology of a Forgotten Festival, Martin Walsh suggests that 'Martinmas' had roots in a pre-Christian festival marking the end of the harvest season and beginning of winter. In the ancient Roman world, 10 November was reckoned as the beginning of winter, while among the Insular Celtic peoples, it was marked by the 1 November festival of Samhain/Calan Gaeaf.

Customes

Traditionally, in many parts of Europe, St Martin's Day marked the end of the harvest and the beginning of winter. The feast coincides with the end of the Octave of Allhallowtide.

Martinmas was traditionally when livestock were slaughtered for winter provision. It may originally have been a time of animal sacrifice, as the Old English name for November was Blōtmōnaþ ('sacrifice month').

Goose is eaten at Martinmas in most places. There is a legend that St Martin, when trying to avoid being ordained bishop, hid in a pen of geese whose cackling gave him away. Once a key medieval autumn feast, a custom of eating goose on the day spread to Sweden from France. It was primarily observed by the craftsmen and noblemen of the towns. In the peasant community, not everyone could afford this, so many ate duck or hen instead.

In winegrowing regions of Europe, the first wine was ready around the time of Martinmas. Although there was no mention of a link between St Martin and winegrowing by Gregory of Tours or other early hagiographers, St Martin is widely credited in France with helping to spread winemaking throughout the region of Tours (Touraine) and facilitating vine-planting. The old Greek tale that Aristaeus discovered the advantage of pruning vines after watching a goat, has been appropriated to St Martin. He is credited with introducing the Chenin blanc grape, from which most of the white wine of western Touraine and Anjou is made.

Bonfires are lit on St Martin's Eve in the Rhineland region of Germany. In the fifteenth century, these bonfires were so numerous that the festival was nicknamed Funkentag (spark day). In the nineteenth century it was recorded that young people danced around the fire and leapt through the flames, and that the ashes were strewn on the fields to make them fertile.

In some German and Dutch-speaking towns, there are nighttime processions of children carrying paper lanterns or turnip lanterns and singing songs of St Martin. These processions are known in German as Laternelaufen.

In parts of Flanders and the Rhineland, processions are led by a man on horseback representing St Martin, who may give out apples, nuts, cakes or other sweets for children. Historically, in Ypres, children hung up stockings filled with hay on Martinmas Eve, and awoke the next morning to find gifts in them. These were said to have been left by St Martin as thanks for the fodder provided for his horse.

In the Swabia and Ansbach regions of Germany, a character called Pelzmärten ('pelt Martin' or 'skin Martin') appeared at Martinmas until the 19th century. With a black face and wearing a cow bell, he ran about frightening children, and he dealt out blows as well as nuts and apples.

In the 6th century, church councils began requiring fasting on all days, except Saturdays and Sundays, from Saint Martin's Day to Epiphany (elsewhere, the Feast of the Three Wise Men for the stopping of the star over Bethlehem) on January 6 (56 days). An addition to and an equivalent to the 40 days fasting of Lent, given its weekend breaks, this was called Quadragesima Sancti Martini (Saint Martin's Lent, or literally "the fortieth of"). This is rarely observed now. This period was shortened to begin on the Sunday before December and became the current Advent within a few centuries. In the Archdiocese of Milan according to Ancient Ambrosian Liturgical usage the feast of St Martin is followed by the First Sunday in Advent (the 6 weeks period is still used in this large Diocese and the Churches outside it, such as in Ticino (Switzerland) that do still use the Ambrosian Liturgy.

Celebrations by Culture

In Austria, St Martin's Day is celebrated similar to Germany. The nights before and on the night of 11 November, children walk in processions carrying lanterns, which they made in school, and sing Martin songs. Martiniloben is celebrated as a collective festival. It marks the end of the wine-growers' year. Events include art exhibitions, wine tastings, and live music. Martinigansl (roasted goose) is the traditional dish of the season.

As Saint Martin of Tours is patron saint of Burgenland, a federal state in Austria, November 11th is a holiday by state law in Burgenland.

Sint-Maarten is an old harvest festival that is celebrated in many European countries and precedes the fasting period of Advent. In the Netherlands, on the evening of 11 November, children went door to door with lanterns made of hollowed-out sugar beet. This has been replaced by paper lanterns, usually crafted by themselves. They sing songs such as "Sinte(re) Sinte(re) Maarten", to receive sweets or fruit in return. In the past, poor people would visit farms on 11 November to get food for the winter. In the 1600s, the city of Amsterdam held boat races on the IJ, where 400 to 500 light craft, both rowing boats and sailboats, took part with a vast crowd on the banks. St Martin is the patron saint of the cities of Utrecht and Groningen.

In Flanders, the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium, St Martin's Eve is celebrated on the evening of 10 November, mainly in West Flanders and around Ypres. Children go through the streets with paper lanterns and candles, and sing songs about St Martin. Sometimes, a man dressed as St Martin rides on a horse in front of the procession. In Wervik, children go from door to door, singing traditional "Séngmarténg" songs, sporting a hollow beetroot with a carved face and a candle inside called "Bolle Séngmarténg"; they gather at an evening bonfire.

In Scotland, Martinmas became one of the legal 'term and quarter days' when rent had to be paid and farm leases were commonly terminated. Although 11 November, traditional Martinmas, was the quarter day for centuries, in the 20th century by statute the Martinmas term day changed to 28 November and this is now in the Term and Quarter Days (Scotland) Act 1990. The legal quarter days are different in England. Martinmas was widely celebrated on 11 November in medieval and early modern England. In his study "Medieval English Martinmesse: The Archaeology of a Forgotten Festival", Martin Walsh describes Martinmas as a festival marking the end of the harvest season and beginning of winter. He suggests it had pre-Christian roots. Martinmas ushered in the "winter revelling season" and involved feasting on the meat of livestock that had been slaughtered for winter provision (especially 'Martlemas beef'), drinking, storytelling, and mumming. It was a time for saying farewell to travelling ploughmen, who shared in the feast along with the harvest-workers.

According to Walsh, Martinmas eventually died out in England as a result of the English Reformation, the emergence of Guy Fawkes Night (5 November), as well as changes in farming and the Industrial Revolution. According to folklore, if the weather is warm on St Martin's Day, then a harsh winter will follow. Today, 11 November is Remembrance Day.

A widespread custom in Germany is to light bonfires, called Martinsfeuer, on St. Martin's Eve. In recent years, the processions that accompany those fires have been spread over almost a fortnight before Martinmas (Martinstag). At one time, the Rhine River valley would be lined with fires on the eve of Martinmas. In the Rhineland, St. Martin's Day is traditionally celebrated with a feast of goose.

The nights before and on the eve itself, children walk in processions called Laternelaufen, carrying lanterns, which they made in school, and sing St. Martin's songs. Usually, the walk starts at a church and goes to a public square. A man on horseback representing St. Martin accompanies the children. When they reach the square, Martin's bonfire is lit and Martin's pretzels are distributed.

In the Rhineland, the children also go from house to house with their lanterns, sing songs and get candy in return. The origin of the procession of lanterns is unclear. To some, it is a substitute for the Martinmas bonfire, which is still lit in a few cities and villages throughout Europe. It formerly symbolized the light that holiness brings to the darkness, just as St Martin brought hope to the poor through his good deeds. Even though the bonfire tradition is gradually being lost, the procession of lanterns is still practiced.

A Martinsgans ("St. Martin's goose") is typically served on St. Martin's Eve following the procession of lanterns. "Martinsgans" is usually served in restaurants, roasted, with red cabbage and dumplings.

The traditional sweet of Martinmas in the Rhineland is Martinshörnchen, a pastry shaped in the form of a croissant, which recalls both the hooves of St. Martin's horse and, by being the half of a pretzel, the parting of his mantle. In some areas, these pastries are instead shaped like men (Stutenkerl or Weckmänner).

St. Martin's Day is also celebrated in German Lorraine and Alsace, which border the Rhineland and are now part of France. Children receive gifts and sweets. In Alsace, in particular the Haut-Rhin mountainous region, families with young children make lanterns out of painted paper that they carry in a colourful procession up the mountain at night. Some schools organize these events, in particular schools of the Rudolf Steiner (Waldorf education) pedagogy.

In the United States, St. Martin's Day celebrations are uncommon, but are typically held by German American communities. Many German restaurants feature a traditional menu with goose and Glühwein (a mulled red wine). St Paul, Minnesota celebrates with a traditional lantern procession around Rice Park. The evening includes German treats and traditions that highlight the season of giving. In Dayton, Ohio the Dayton Liederkranz-Turner organization hosts a St Martin's Family Celebration on the weekend before with an evening lantern parade to the singing of St Martin's carols, followed by a bonfire.

St Martin's Day (Mortens Dag), November 11, and St Martin's Eve (Mortensaften), November 10, was an early autumn feast in Denmark. Eating St Martin's goose (mortensgås) St Martin's Eve was a well-known custom in Denmark. The oldest known Danish source is from 1616. Today, the goose is often replaced by duck.

St Martin's Day or St Martin's Eve (Mårtensafton) was an important medieval autumn feast in Sweden. In early November, geese are ready for slaughter, and on St Martin's Eve it is tradition to have a roast goose dinner. The custom is particularly popular in Scania in southern Sweden, where goose farming has long been practised, but it has gradually spread northwards. A proper goose dinner also includes svartsoppa (a heavily spiced soup made from geese blood) and apple charlotte.

In Croatia, St. Martin's Day (Martinje, Martinovanje) marks the day when the must traditionally turns to wine. The must is usually considered impure and sinful, until it is baptised and turned into wine. The baptism is performed by someone who dresses up as a bishop and blesses the wine; this is usually done by the host. Another person is chosen as the godfather of the wine.

A Czech proverb connected with the Feast of St. Martin – Martin přijíždí na bílém koni (transl. "Martin is coming on a white horse") – signifies that the first half of November in the Czech Republic is the time when it often starts to snow. St. Martin's Day is the traditional feast day in the run-up to Advent. Restaurants often serve roast goose as well as young wine from the recent harvest known as Svatomartinské víno, which is similar to Beaujolais nouveau as the first wine of the season. Wine shops and restaurants around Prague pour the first of the St. Martin's wines at 11:11 a.m. Many restaurants offer special menus for the day, featuring the traditional roast goose. Many people bake special St. Martin rolls in a shape of a horseshoe filled with nuts or poppy seeds (Svatomartinské rohlíčky). Children walk in processions carrying lanterns.

In Poland, 11 November is National Independence Day. St. Martin's Day (Dzień Świętego Marcina) is celebrated mainly in the city of Poznań where its citizens buy and eat considerable amounts of croissants filled with almond paste with white poppy seeds, the rogal świętomarciński or St. Martin's Croissants. Legend has it that this centuries-old tradition commemorates a Poznań baker's dream which had the saint entering the city on a white horse that lost its golden horseshoe. The next morning, the baker whipped up horseshoe-shaped croissants filled with almonds, white poppy seeds and nuts, and gave them to the poor. In recent years, competition amongst local patisseries has become fierce. The product is registered under the European Union Protected Designation of Origin and only a limited number of bakers hold an official certificate. Poznanians celebrate the festival with concerts, parades and a fireworks show on Saint Martin's Street. Goose meat dishes are also eaten during the holiday.

The biggest event in Slovenia is the St. Martin's Day celebration in Maribor which marks the symbolic winding up of all the wine growers' endeavours. There is the ceremonial "christening" of the new wine, and the arrival of the Wine Queen. The square Trg Leona Štuklja is filled with musicians and stalls offering autumn produce and delicacies.

In some parts of Ireland, on the eve of St. Martin's Day (Lá Fhéile Mártain in Irish), it was tradition to sacrifice a cockerel by bleeding it. The blood was collected and sprinkled on the four corners of the house. Also in Ireland, no wheel of any kind was to turn on St. Martin's Day, because Martin was said by some people to have been thrown into a mill stream and killed by the wheel and so it was not right to turn any kind of wheel on that day. A local legend in County Wexford says that putting to sea is to be avoided as St. Martin rides a white horse across Wexford Bay bringing death by drowning to any who see him.

In Welsh mythology the day is associated with the Cŵn Annwn, the spectral hounds who escort souls to the otherworld (Annwn). St Martin's Day was one of the few nights the hounds would engage in a Wild Hunt, stalking the land for criminals and villains. The supernatural character of the day in Welsh culture is evident in the number omens associated with it. Marie Trevelyan recorded that if the hooting of an owl was heard on St Martin's Day it was seen as a bad omen for that district. If a meteor was seen, then there would be trouble for the whole nation.

Mārtiņi (Martin's) is traditionally celebrated by Latvians on 10 November, marking the end of the preparations for winter, such as salting meat and fish, storing the harvest and making preserves. It is a day when the lines between the spirit world and the world of the living begin to blur. Mārtiņi also marks the beginning of masquerading and sledding, among other winter activities.

St. Martin's Day (Jum San Martin in Maltese) is celebrated in Malta on the Sunday nearest to 11 November. Children are given a bag full of fruits and sweets associated with the feast, known by the Maltese as Il-Borża ta' San Martin, "St. Martin's bag". This bag may include walnuts, hazelnuts, almonds, chestnuts, dried-or-processed-figs, seasonal-fruit-(like oranges, tangerines, apples and pomegran ates) and "Saint Martin's bread roll" (Maltese: Ħobża ta' San Martin). In old days, nuts were used by the children in their games.

There is a traditional rhyme associated with this custom:

Ġewż, Lewż, Qastan, Tin
Kemm inħobbu lil San Martin.
(Walnuts, almonds, chestnuts, figs
I love Saint Martin so much.)

A feast is celebrated in the village of Baħrija on the outskirts of Rabat, including a procession led by the statue of Saint Martin. There is also a fair, and a show for local animals. Cooking chestnuts on the open fire was one of the main attractions. San Anton School, a private school on the island, organises a walk to and from a cave especially associated with Martin in remembrance of the day.

This period is also quite popular because of the usual good weather period that occurs in Portugal in this time of year, called Verão de São Martinho (St. Martin's Summer). It is frequently tied to the legend since Portuguese versions of St. Martin's legend usually replace the snowstorm with rain (because snow is not frequent in most parts of Portugal, while rain is common at that time of the year) and have Jesus bringing the end of it, thus making the "summer" a gift from God.

St. Martin's Day (Dia de São Martinho) is commonly associated with the celebration of the maturation of the year's wine, being traditionally the first day when the new wine can be tasted. It is celebrated, traditionally around a bonfire, eating the magusto, chestnuts roasted under the embers of the bonfire (sometimes dry figs and walnuts), and drinking a local light alcoholic beverage called água-pé (literally "foot water", made by adding water to the pomace left after the juice is pressed out of the grapes for wine – traditionally by stomping on them in vats with bare feet, and letting it ferment for several days), or the stronger jeropiga (a sweet liquor obtained in a very similar fashion, with aguardente added to the water). Água-pé, though no longer available for sale in supermarkets and similar outlets (it is officially banned for sale in Portugal), is still generally available in small local shops from domestic production.[citation needed]

Leite de Vasconcelos regarded the magusto as the vestige of an ancient sacrifice to honor the dead and stated that it was tradition in Barqueiros to prepare, at midnight, a table with chestnuts for the deceased family members to eat. A typical Portuguese saying related to Saint Martin's Day:

É dia de São Martinho;
comem-se castanhas, prova-se o vinho.
(It is St. Martin's Day,
we'll eat chestnuts, we'll taste the wine.)

St Martin's Day is widely celebrated in Galicia. It is the traditional day for slaughtering fattened pigs for the winter. This tradition has given way to the popular saying "A cada cerdo le llega su San Martín from Galician A cada porquiño chégalle o seu San Martiño ("Every pig gets its St Martin"). The phrase is used to indicate that wrongdoers eventually get their comeuppance. In Moaña the San Martiño Festival starts early in the morning on 9 November and extends over four days.

In Sicily, November is the winemaking season. On the day Sicilians eat anise, hard biscuits dipped into Moscato, Malvasia or Passito. l'Estate di San Martino (Saint Martin's Summer) is the traditional reference to a period of unseasonably warm weather in early to mid November, possibly shared with the Normans (who founded the Kingdom of Sicily) as common in at least late English folklore. The day is celebrated in a special way in a village near Messina and at a monastery dedicated to Saint Martin overlooking Palermo beyond Monreale. Other places in Sicily mark the day by eating fava beans.

IN ART

Pieter Bruegel the Elder's physically largest painting is The Wine of Saint Martin's Day, which depicts the saint giving charity.

There is a closely similar painting by Peeter Baltens, which can be seen here.

Simone Martini (XIV century) represented Saint Martin's life in lots of frescoes in a chapel of the Basilica of Saint Francis of Assisi in Assisi.

The Dutch film Flesh and Blood (1985) prominently features a statue of Saint Martin. A mercenary in Renaissance Italy, named Martin, finds a statue of Saint Martin cutting his cloak and takes it as a sign to desert and rogue around under the saint's protection.

Bay 20 in the Chartres Cathedral portrays the life of St. Martin in a 40-panel stained glass window.